THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M.M. JACOB): (a) and (b). With the completion of election and the restoration of the popular government in Punjab, it is hoped that the outstanding issues between Punjab and Haryana will be resolved through discussions and mutual adjustments. The Govt. of India will provide whatever assistance is required towards an amicable solution to the problem.

Blackmarketing of Petroleum Products

1407. SHRI SHIV SHARAN VERMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 1277 on November 28, 1991 and state:

(a) whether regarding black marketing of petroleum products has since been collected so far;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) to (c). The information has not yet become available. It is being collected from all the States.

[*English*]

Replacing Physical Control on Agricultural Sector

1408. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to replace physical control on the Agricultural sector by price mechanism;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (c). There is generally no physical control in the agricultural sector.

Under the existing agricultural price mechanism, the interests of the farmers are being ensured by announcing minimum support prices for major agricultural commodities and organising price support operations by Government and co-operative agencies.

Prawn Culture Project in West Bengal

1409. DR. ASIM BALA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any prawn project in West Bengal is being implemented with the financial assistance from the Department of Bio-technology; and

(b) if so, the location thereof and the year of its commissioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b). The Department of Bio-technology at present is not supporting any prawn culture project in West Bengal.

Oil Exploration in Eastern Areas

1410. SHRI HARADHAN ROY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan for oil exploration in the Eastern areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) During the 8th Plan (1992-97) ONGC has planned additional 2-D and 3-D seismic surveys and drilling of exploratory wells in the areas of Assam, Nagaland, Cachar, Tripura, Mizoram and West Bengal.

Oil India Limited in the same period has also planned additional 2-D and 3-D seismic surveys and drilling of exploratory wells in areas of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and North East Coast. Four blocks onshore and three blocks offshore Cachar, Mizoram, West Bengal and North-East Coast have been offered to private companies in the Fourth Round of Bilding for exploration for oil and gas.

(c) Does not arise.

Letters from Members of Parliament

1411. SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of letters received in his Ministry from the Members of Parliament during the last 12 months, month-wise;

(b) the number out of them to which acknowledgment and final reply had been sent, month-wise;

(c) the number of the letters still pending, month-wise;

(d) the reasons for the delay in acknowledging the letters and giving final replies thereto; and

(e) the steps taken to expedite the replies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M.M. JACOB): (a) to (e). A statement showing the number of letters received, final replies sent and pendency from February, 1991 to January, 1992 is attached. Acknowledgment is sent invariably as and when the communications is received. Out of 3791 communications pending at the end of January, 1992, 3400 relate to Freedom Fighters' Pension which require consultation with State Governments, reference to old records etc. before final reply is sent. Out of the balance of 391, 195 relate to law and order situation for which information has to be collected from the respective State Governments, and in respect of 139, information has to be collected from the Central Police Organisations who in turn have to consult their units since they relate to transfer, postings etc. There is a monthly return to watch the disposal of such receipts. Periodical views are also carried out.

STATEMENT

Number of letters received final - replies sent and pendency from February, 1991 to January, 1992

Month	*No. of letters received from MPs during the last 12 months (month-wise)*	*No of letters in which final reply was sent (month-wise)*	*No. of letters pending (month-wise).* (cumulative)*
			B/F 2119
February, 1991	497	392	2224
March	568	470	2322